OUR SERIALS

JUDGMENT.

Go back to the beginning;
Find the cause.
Trace the weakness to its source,
Then dare to pause

Before you give your judgment
As to sin,
And drive a fellow mortal
Farther in.

For they who fall not always
Have the chance
To live their lives unharmed
By circumstance.

They sometimes do their best,
And, if they fail,
Be thou the one to succor;
Never rail.

Blame ever shuts away the
Light of day;
Then cheer and bless and comfort
As you may.

Lend them thy strength if of the
Strong thou art.
Give of thy love and tenderness
A part.

And never dare to say the
Words that kill,
Else thou may sometime feed
The selfsame mill.

—Grace G. Bostwick, in Chicago Record-Herald.

The Iron Brigade

A STORY OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

By GEN. CHARLES KING

Author of "Norman Holt," "The Colonel's Daughter," "Fort Frayne," Etc.

CHAPTER XXIV.—CONTINUED.

Four o'clock, and still the batteries of Hall and Stewart, with three hard-pounded brigades, hold their ground on the ridge, while the valley behind them is fast filling with Ewell's madly exultant men, driving Howard's beaten divisions before them. To hang on longer is simply madness. Beginning at the right, therefore, stern and silent, the devoted brigades give ground slowly, still facing the foe, still firing low and well. The crush comes as the streams of wounded thicken at the outskirts of the town, merging with the fugitives of the Eleventh corps, and the roads and streets are blocked by batteries, ambulances, stray caissons and ammunition wagons, all in full retreat. The pinch of the fight, the crowning hour of the day, the bloodiest battle of all the 40 hours of thrilling combat, is here on the slope to the north of the seminary, where, from the teeth of the foe, from the midst of their slaughtered horses, the men of the west essay to drag and save their pets, their comrades in every fight and field, the black-mouthed, smoking, heated, still thundering guns of battery "B."

Davis and Daniel—two fighting southern brigadiers they—are riding madly among their powder-stained men; driving them on in the face of those stubborn wild westerners; pointing their swords at the crippled guns, where men are straining at the wheels and slashing at the harness of the slaughtered horses. "Get those guns!" shriek the leaders. "Square accounts for the battle-flags lost in the cut!" But, between the surging rush of Carolina, Mississippi and Georgia, with the supporting Virginians at their back, and that battle-scarred battery limping slowly away down the pike, there still interposes that stern, indomitable, magnificent line in blue—all that is left of the Iron Brigade—as, front to the foe, closing ever on its colors, volleying steadily, defiantly, unflinchingly into the very face of its outnumbering, yet respectful, pursuers, it backs away over the ridge, leaving over a third of its membership strewing its tracks, another third having already been borne bleeding away toward the town, and so, as the sun goes down on the tremendous day, so, slowly, steadily, wrapped in clouds of its own battle smoke, the eastern brigade descends to the plain, the Sixth last to halt in the streets of the town and to cheer to the echo the cause of the flag, while the guns once more unlimber, on the rise of Cemetery Hill, as though daring the foemen to come on and take them. No wonder the Badgers grip hands with the Wolverines, they that remain. Almost 500 of the Michigan men went into the fight by the side of the veterans. Only 100 are left in line when at last the day is done. Fully 300 have been shot down on the field; some few have been captured. In officers alone their dead outnumber those of the rest of the brigade. Of the Black Hats surviving there stand now but 70.

"And they might have cut you off entirely," says Doubleday, as he rides among the remnants, halting along the wooded hillside, east of their rescued guns. "Buford saw, what you couldn't see through the smoke, that two brigades were sweeping down south of the seminary to intercept you. He formed his squadrons to charge. They saw it, by jove! and halted and formed squares to resist him, and that saved you. Capt. Benton, I wish you would ride over and present my compliments and thanks to Gen. Buford. He's just moving off past that stone farm house yonder down in the valley." And so ended the day.

CHAPTER XXV.

LADUE'S LAST RETREAT.

In the two great days that followed there was little to do for the little left of the Iron Brigade. Sore-hearted over the loss of so many cherished comrades, yet confident that their valor had not been vain, the survivors hung silently to their assigned position, and awaited developments.

And, when the morrow came, Benton was early in saddle and away to the left of the line. He was bitter and chafed in spirit over his wrongs. He realized that under existing conditions nothing more than half-hearted acknowledgment of error could be looked for, but he had determined that the moment things settled down and the department had time to attend to something besides the momentous affairs of the nation, he would demand justice. And now both Wadsworth and Doubleday had spoken in heartiest praise of his behavior throughout that heroic battle of the first day. So far so good. What he longed for, on one hand, was a chance to square accounts with McKinnon. What he hoped for, on another, was opportunity to teach that disdainful girl how deeply she had wronged, as well as affronted, him.

He would have known better had he had time to analyze the chagrin and pain and jealousy which possessed him all the long hours that followed his morning talk with some staff comrades of the Second corps. It seems that three days before, on the 29th of June, while they of the Second were pushing cautiously northward through Maryland, they were made aware that a column of cavalry was passing around them from the south, and that while they were swinging through Uniontown the cavalry were trotting through Westminster, only five miles from their flank. "Gregg's division, of course," said they who saw through glasses the far-distant column. "Gregg, not much!" said Haskell, who had ridden out toward Union Mills on a scout of his own. "It's Jeb Stuart with his whole outfit and not a little of ours. He must have been helping himself every mile of his way from the Potomac." And this, indeed, proved to be the case; for, as they lay in the fields about Uniontown that night, there reached them a rueful, crest-fallen little party of officers, gathered in by Stuart at the crossing of the Baltimore pike. Two were field officers who from convalescent hospital were striving to overtake their regiments; the third was Maj. McKinnon, ordered to report without delay to the commanding general, Army of the Potomac; and McKinnon, it seems, had also been convalescing in Baltimore, but not from wounds. These three, with their light luggage, had been pounced

LADUE'S LAST WORDS.

upon at a wayside tavern by a roistering troop of Stuart's flankers and dragged before this cavalry commander. One of the parties presented the three captured officers. Stuart invited his captives to be seated while an aide took their names, regiments, etc., and as McKinnon gave his there was sudden sensation. The young cavalryman sprang forward, seized McKinnon's hand, shook it effusively, and, to the amaze of every one present, exclaimed: "Gen. Stuart, I am sure, sir, you will treat this gentleman with every possible consideration. It was he, sir, who so nobly defended my father at Washington when Secretary Stanton would have sent him to Fort Warren—and Rosalie, too, for that matter. It was Maj. McKinnon, sir, who pleaded their cause with the secretary and had them returned to Charlottesville. It was he, sir, who in other ways most generously aided them."

"I am glad to hear it, Jack," said the bearded general, evidently warming toward the westerner who had so befriended his kith and kin. "Of course you're—sure of it?"

"Sure of it, sir?—I had it from father and Rosalie both! They had supposed that they were indebted—or rather that their helper was a very different person, a man whom they had befriended; but that all turned out to be an error." And the upshot of it all was, said Haskell, "that Stuart sent the three to our lines, the two other officers paroled until exchanged, but McKinnon, by Jove, released with Stuart's compliments, and it's my candid belief, damn him, that Mac would a heap rather be in Washington on parole than out here on duty. Shouldn't wonder if Stuart took his measure before he let him slide." Manifestly Haskell didn't fancy McKinnon.

One thing for Benton to ponder over, therefore, was the question how on earth had McKinnon in so short a time been able to persuade that usually clear-sighted girl to the belief that he had used such powerful influence in their behalf.

But there was still another thing to add to his chagrin and perplexity. Col. Kennard, one of the paroled pair, told Haskell all he had seen of Stuart and his devil-may-care command, and much about this young confederate officer—Chilton. "Because," said Kennard, "I heard Chilton say to McKinnon he was praying that he might yet meet Capt. Benton. There was a union man he'd shoot on sight! And Winston said Amen!" "Now, Fred," said Haskell, as he called for his horse, "I've got to ride the lines and get the reports; but, we've got McKinnon up with the army at last, and soon as we're through with this business we'll nail him." But evidently it was business first in Haskell's eyes.

So Fred Benton had two burning desires as he threaded his way through the swarm of arriving batteries and rode slowly back to Wadsworth; one was to meet McKinnon and brand him as the author of the slanders and the other was in some way to wring from Chilton an explanation of his violent threat. Little did he dream how soon he should be spared the need—and through what sad, strange circumstance.

Between the twilight of the second of July that witnessed Ewell's bloody assault and the dawning of that black Friday of the Lost Cause—the third day—something had happened to give new heart to Jackson's old men. The "Stonewall" brigade was there still in the woods in the low ground between the rocky point, where crouched the survivors of Wadsworth's division, and the forest-covered heights off to the eastward, where cavalry guidons—union cavalry—had been flashing in the last rays of the setting sun. Somewhere in the dim fields there was stir and excitement even in the wearied bivouacs of Ewell; and, under the starlight, eager to satisfy his general's restless desire to know what it all meant, Fred Benton had crept out to the front.

The word has gone the rounds, to the joy of every soldier heart, that the new commander meant to stand and fight, and if Lee could muster no more men than these already thrown in, he might hammer the lines in vain. Now, if only Stuart and his pet brigades would but stay lost, so that no fear need be felt for the far right flank, all would indeed be well!

But would Stuart stay lost? Could he have got so far away as not to be found and by this time returned to the army; and when he came, would it not be from the north, and thus bring him in on the very flank they were now defending? Tired as he was Benton could not sleep for thinking of the disclosures made through Haskell.

Alone and afoot, after a word with his gray-haired chief, he slipped out and away to the Baltimore pike. This he followed southeasterly nearly half a mile, greeted occasionally by low-toned challenge of sentry; but other officers were hurrying swiftly to and fro, and there was little detention. As early as three o'clock he found himself following a patrol down a rocky pathway toward the creek, and, learning from outlying sentry there that no force seemed to be in his immediate front—only a few pickets—Benton explained that he wished to crawl out far enough to be beyond the sound of trampling hoof and rumbling wheel at the pike, that he might listen the better. And, creeping from bush to bush to avoid the moonlit spaces, less than half an hour before dawn he had succeeded in gaining fully 400 yards out toward the northeast, and there low voices warned him to lie still and listen. He was either on or within the confederate picket line, and had much to learn and little time.

And then, as he crouched close to the trunk of a spreading tree, faint and sweet, soft yet stirring, so far out to the north that the performer doubtless thought it beyond the range of inimical ears, a cavalry trumpet began to sound the martial reveille, stirring some nearby watcher to remonstrance. "Damn that infernal dash-dashed idiot," stormed a low, half-choked voice. "He'll tell the whole dash-dashed Yankee army our fellows have come! Go back there, sergeant, and tell our trumpter if he dares to toot a horn I'll murder him."

Then somebody rustled off through the bushes, and somebody else spoke. "Some of Hampton's crowd, I reckon. How long'd the general want us to stay out hyuh?"

"Till Ewell attacks at dawn. Then we'll mount and look out for Gregg. His people are out here to the east of us. Stuart'll get after them, you bet, as soon as it's light."

"We haven't got a horse that can more'n stagger. All worn out, I tell you," protested the second voice.

"No more'n theirs are. Jennings met us back there on the Hanover pike, and I heard him tell Fitz Lee Gregg's horses were all played out——"

"Jennings be damned!" broke in a third voice, impetuously, and Benton started at the sound. It was Chilton's beyond shadow of a doubt. Chilton again with his old regiment, and these with him were doubtless officers of Fitz Lee's brigade, scouting, probably, well in front of the cavalry lines, yet proving that Stuart was there at last, and could be counted on to make things lively in the morning. It was high time to slip back and give warning, but getting back was slow and tedious—even perilous work. The dawn was breaking when, in bedraggled garb, Benton found his gray-headed general in the circle about the commander. Before Benton had time to whisper half his explanation, Wadsworth's tired eyes flamed with eager light.

"Here's the very news to prove it, general!" he cried. "Capt. Benton, of my staff, is just in from that front. Stuart is there and Ewell means to attack——"

"How do you know Stuart is there?" demanded Meade, whirling sharply on the young officer. The most courteous and polished of gentlemen at other times, Meade was irascible in the extreme in battle.

"I heard voices, sir—one that I well knew, an officer of the First Virginia—heard them say that Fitz Lee was there, and that Stuart would strike Gregg, and that Ewell would attack at dawn——" But even as he spoke came confirmation of his words. In the dim light of the dawn, the guns of Greene and Geary had suddenly opened on shadowy gray lines, issuing from the opposite woods, and Wadsworth sprang for his horse. But the commander signalled Benton to remain. "You have done a gallant deed, captain, and have brought me most valuable information," were his words a moment later; "It shall not be forgotten."

Yet Benton was surprised late that afternoon when, after the din of the most terrific cannonade ever heard on this continent, and, after daring and determined attack, Pickett, Ewell and Stuart all had been repulsed—Pickett with dreadful loss—there came a message summoning the aide-de-camp to Meade's headquarters. An orderly led him toward a rude wagon-shed beneath which knelt four officers, surrounding a prostrate figure. "He asked for you," said a surgeon, briefly, and one glance at the face of the stricken soldier was enough. Benton threw himself on his knees, and clasped the cold, nerveless hand, feebly lifted to greet him. The failing eyes lighted up one moment in love then closed in agony, as a spasm of torment seized the fragile form. "Paul—Paul—my God!" was all that Benton could murmur, and a surgeon hurriedly brushed before him and held a little silver cup to the twitching lips of his patient. "Mortal, yes," was his whisper, as the poor lad, exhausted, lay for a moment in a deathlike swoon. Then the stimulant seemed to revive him a bit. The dark eyes slowly opened and fixed on Benton's quivering face. "Bless you, old boy!"—and every whisper seemed to come with a gasp—"I heard—I knew—you'd never give up her letters. Where's—McKinnon?" And here the poor lad seemed drifting away again. Benton thrust his left arm under the fallen head and strove to raise it, while once more the surgeon placed the cup to the parted lips; and, noting the name, a staff officer turned quickly and said a word to a waiting soldier. It was another minute before the swooning lad reopened his eyes. Two other forms had joined the silent group. Benton saw nothing but the loved face. Then some one, well meaning, bent and questioned: "You asked for Maj. McKinnon. Did you wish to speak——"

"McKinnon!" whispered Paul. "McKinnon?" and now a shudder seemed to seize the wasting form. "Tell him for me I know he stole my letters. Tell him I told Rosalie—every word he said of you was a cowardly—lie."

And not until the dead hand in his was cold and stiffening did Benton know what caused the strange movement and sensation in that group as Ladue's last words were spoken. Almost inaudible, they had reached the straining ears of four who bent to listen, and of one who, standing, would gladly have been deaf to them.

[To Be Continued.]

THE UP-TO-DATE STYLE.

Something That Must Be Followed by Preachers as Well as Tailors.

William Dean Howells was at Oxford, where an honorary degree had been conferred upon him. He was walking down the High street with an aged fellow of Brasenose college, relates an exchange. The talk turned to the passing of one literary school and the rise of another, and the Oxford man said:

"I am reminded of an old clergyman I used to know in Woodstock.

"He was very old. The only person in his parish of equal age with him was a tailor and the tailor and he were great friends. They often called on one another.

"Well, one evening the clergyman sat in the tailor's shop. He was quiet and thoughtful. He gazed into the fire in silence for a long time. Finally he said with a sigh:

"'James, I can't tell why it is that our congregation is getting smaller and smaller. I am sure I preach as well as I ever did, and I must have gathered a great deal of wisdom and experience since I first came among you.'

"'Ah, sir,' said the tailor sadly, 'old parsons, nowadays, are like old tailors. I am sure I sew as well as ever I did, and my cloth is the same, or better; but it's the cut—the new cut—that beats me.'"

A Russian Wedding.

Besides bridemaids there are bridesmen, these latter being obliged to present the bridesmaids with sweetmeats. A personage follows the procession bearing an elegantly mounted picture of Christ in gold and silver, which is stationed against the altar. The bridesmaids do not all dress alike, and their number is unlimited. The bride's old nurse superintends the removal of the dowry from the bride's home to that of her future husband and is a most important member on the day of the wedding. A witness—a connection of the family—pays the priest's fees, and the number of assistants, each with a separate duty allotted him, is often considerably great.—Washington Star.

A Little Green.

I was in a bookstore the other day, when a woman, who stood beside me, said: "I want that new book, 'Belles Lettres,' which you advertise. I suppose it is a new novel, and I read all the novels as they come out." The attendant tried to explain, but the would-be purchaser scathingly interrupted: "Why have you put it on the list over there, if you haven't got it? But I presume it is for sale farther down the street, where they are up to date." She reminded me of the man who wanted to buy an appendix, thinking that it might replace a part of his anatomy that was out of order.—Saunterer, in Boston Budget.